

## DID YOU KNOW???

(about)

### Third Grade Guarantee Exemptions for Students with Disabilities

#### Key Points for IEP Teams

- Students with **significant cognitive disabilities** may be exempt from all provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGRG). These are the students who would qualify for the Alternate Assessment. This exemption, and the use of alternate assessment, should be an annual IEP team discussion and decision. The student's IEP should still address the extended standards related to literacy.
- **Some** students with IEPs **may** be exempt from the “retention in the third grade” requirement **ONLY**. The IEP team should have adequate progress monitoring and reading achievement data to **begin consideration of exemption from retention by the end of the third quarter of grade 3 (not earlier)**. In this case:
  - The IEP Team needs to identify what assessments were used to make the determination (noted in Section 6, PLOP). These should be the same assessments that are used to determine proficiency for all students.
  - There must be specific goals for Reading (Section 6), and the Specially Designed Services Section of the IEP (Section 7) must clearly identify the services of the Intervention Specialist for the reading goal(s). The IEP should include clear, targeted reading interventions and progress markers that will take place in grade 4.
  - The IEP Team *must* also make a notation of the exemption on the Testing Page (Section 12) as an Other within the testing accommodations box: “Exempt from Third Grade Reading Guarantee”
- If a student is exempted from the Third Grade Reading Guarantee by the IEP team, please email Patty Schulz at [Patricia.Schulz@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Patricia.Schulz@clevelandmetroschools.org). Include the student's name, school, and whether he/she is exempt from all provisions or from the retention provision only.

#### Detailed Information

The Ohio Department of Education has provided information on the Third Grade Guarantee and the Exemptions for Students with Disabilities. Ohio legislation has identified the Third Grade Guarantee as a method to give a greater emphasis to reading instruction and intervention in the early grades for students.

Similar to the exemption from consequences for the Ohio Graduation Test, to be eligible to be excused from retention in the third grade, the student should meet one of two criteria:

1. the student is completing a curriculum that is significantly different from the curriculum completed by other students required to take Grade 3 Reading state assessment, OR
2. the student requires accommodations that are beyond the allowable accommodations as outlined in OAC 3301-13-03(H).

If the student meets one of these criteria, the IEP team then decides if the student will be excused from the Third Grade Reading Guarantee retention provision.

There are two types of exemptions for students with disabilities in the Third Grade Reading Guarantee policy. Each exemption involves different types of students and exempts different parts of the policy.

1. *Students with significant cognitive disabilities are **exempt from all provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.***

- ✓ IEP teams may specify that a child in any grade, kindergarten through grade three, is exempt from all provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee if the student is participating in a significantly modified curriculum.
- ✓ Under this exemption, the student is exempt from all provisions of the Third Grade Reading Guarantee, including:

Annual reading diagnostics;  
Reading improvement and monitoring plans (RIMPs);  
Special teacher qualifications for the teacher of record in reading; and  
Student retention in the third grade.

- ✓ This exemption should be an annual IEP team discussion and decision.
- ✓ The student's IEP should still address the extended standards and include goals around precursors to literacy. For example, the IEP should address the student's mode of communication and communicative intent.

2. *Some students with IEPs may be **exempt from retention in the third grade because of TGRG.***

- ✓ Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, all students scoring below the cut score on the third grade reading OAA must be retained unless the student has an IEP that specifically exempts them from retention by the Third Grade Reading Guarantee. (This is one of several retention exemptions. For more information on the other exemptions, please see the Third Grade Reading Guarantee Guidance Manual. <http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Early-Learning/Third-Grade-Reading-Guarantee/TGRG-Guidance-Manual.pdf.aspx>)
- ✓ The retention exemption should be discussed by the IEP team for all students who may qualify during the third grade year. The IEP team should have adequate progress monitoring and reading achievement data to begin consideration of exemption from retention by the end of the third quarter of grade 3, according to ODE guidance.
- ✓ If a student's IEP team determines that the student should be exempt from retention, he/she is NOT exempted from other provisions. The following must be in place:

Annual reading diagnostics;  
Reading improvement and monitoring plans (RIMPs); and  
Special teacher qualifications for the teacher of record in reading.

IEP Teams should review and discuss the following assessment information when determining if a student with a disability is exempted from the TGRG:

- KRA - for grade K
- NWEA - for grade 1 and grade 2
- Fall State Reading Assessment – for grade 3
- STAR Assessments
- AIMSweb Curriculum-Based Assessment and Progress Monitoring

The IEP Team needs to identify which assessments were used to make the determination. This should be discussed in the Profile and Present Level of Performance sections of the IEP. There must be specific goals for Reading, and the Specially Designed Services Section of the IEP must clearly identify the services of the Intervention Specialist for the reading goal(s). The IEP Team *must* also make a notation of the exemption on the Testing Page as an Other within the testing accommodations box. This would be a statement that the student is exempt from the Third Grade Guarantee.

If a student with a disability is exempted from the TGRG, the student's case manager must email the following individual with the student's name, school, and exemption status:

- ✓ Patty Schulz ([Patricia.Schulz@clevelandmetroschools.org](mailto:Patricia.Schulz@clevelandmetroschools.org)) – needs this information as the special education representative to the District's Third Grade Reading Guarantee team